

the Committee. While that is all we ask, we are faced all day with a stubborn opposition, and here at midnight we are told that this simple clause cannot pass after all this consideration. Is the country to draw no inference? What inference can it draw?

Mr. McKENZIE: I do not know.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. gentleman does not know, but I am afraid the country knows.

Mr. BUREAU: Make allowance for the time you spent in discussion.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. gentleman will not allow one clause to pass which merely asserts that the Canadian National Railways may revive charters, when he himself knows, as do all hon. members, that the Committee is at liberty to say later on what charters may be revived.

Mr. McKENZIE: I think my hon. friend is all wrong. It is wrong to ask us to revive forty-four charters, saying that later on he is going to pare them down.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. member knows that we did not say we would pare anything down. When the schedule to this clause is considered, which it must be when all the clauses are through, this Committee may take out any one of these charters or all of them, or may add to the list. In the face of that, and knowing that he commits himself to no single charter by the passing of this clause, he asserts that he cannot let this clause go through. What must be the judgment of the country on that attitude?

Mr. McKENZIE: I leave nothing to inference. I have stated absolutely and clearly what my position is this year and what my position was last year. I care not what suggestion the minister may make as to what inference the country may draw.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I take the hon. gentleman's position and I believe that it is one of opposition to Government ownership. His opinion of Government ownership might lead him to criticise this Bill. I am free to admit that he is opposed to Government ownership, and he can stand or fall before the country on that. He has not been at all equivocal on that point. But because he is opposed to Government ownership, is that any explanation of why he should refuse to let the Committee vote on a simple clause of this Bill the only intent of which is the revival of specific charters which are still awaiting the consideration of the Com-

[Mr. Meighen.]

mittee? Is that the necessary corollary of his disbelief in the principle of Government ownership? It has no relation to it whatever. I still await an explanation of why the hon. gentleman cannot allow this clause to pass after a whole day's deliberation.

Mr. BUREAU: The amendment reads:

The times for the commencement and completion of the construction of the lines of railway specified in the second schedule to this Act which any of the companies comprised in the Canadian Northern system were authorized to construct, are hereby extended for two years and five years respectively after the passing of this Act.

Mr. MEIGHEN: And we will submit these charters when the schedule is under consideration and they can then be dealt with.

Mr. BUREAU: After the clause is passed you have revived for from two to five years every line of railway specified in the second schedule to this Act.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Subject to consideration.

Mr. BUREAU: There is absolutely no restriction.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. gentleman knows right well that the schedule can be amended when we come to its consideration.

Mr. BUREAU: I am not discussing that.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Will the hon. gentleman say that the schedule cannot be amended, abbreviated or extended when we come to its consideration?

Mr. BUREAU: I am not under cross-examination; I am reading the amendment drafted by my hon. friend.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Why will the hon. gentleman not answer the question?

Mr. BUREAU: I am not answering questions; I am putting a question.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I can answer it myself.

Mr. BUREAU: The hon. gentleman drafted the law and has to stand by it. The section as proposed to be amended provides that:

The times for the commencement and completion of the construction of the lines of railway specified in the second schedule to this Act—are hereby extended.

You cannot separate the clause.

Mr. MEIGHEN: We do not need to separate the clause.

Mr. BUREAU: These extensions are all granted without being mentioned.